

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 50, Chapter 8

Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Program

Implementation Step 2 Proposals

PIN: 10018
Applicant Name: Regional Water Authority
Project Title: American River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Program

Funds Requested: \$ 25,000,000
Total Project Cost: \$ 407,608,878

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| Total Proposal Score: 116 |
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Description: This Step 2 grant proposal results from the consolidation of the Central and South Sacramento County Regional Water Partnership and the Regional Water Authority Integrated Regional Water Management Program. The proposal includes expansion of surface water treatment capacity, additional groundwater extraction capacity, water transmission improvements, water recycling projects, stormwater runoff management, watershed monitoring, and wetlands/habitat improvements.

Question: Adopted IRWMP and Proof of Formal Adoption 5

The IRWMP was adopted by the Freeport Regional Water Authority (FRWA) on May 25, 2006, and the Regional Water Authority (RWA) on May 18, 2006.

Question: Description of Region 5

Description of the region and mapping of the various regional characteristics, current and future water resources of the region, and quality and quantity of water resources within the region is detailed. Explanation to define the regional boundary is provided. A 20-year analysis of water supply and demand is provided for all water purveyors within the region. The discussion of the social and cultural makeup of the region, important social and cultural values, and economic conditions and important trends within the region is detailed.

Question: Objectives 4

The regional planning objectives and the manner in which they were determined are identified in the IRWMP. The IRWMP addresses the major water related objectives and conflicts in the region. However, the discussion of conflicts within the region lacks detail and would benefit from specific examples.

Question: Water Management Strategies and Integration 5

The IRWMP identifies 16 strategies and includes detailed descriptions. It includes specific actions for a majority of the strategies and how they will be employed to meet the objectives of the IRWMP. A matrix of projects is provided that identifies how each project relates to the objectives. A discussion of why a specific water management strategy is not applicable to the region is provided.

Question: Priorities and Schedule 5

The priorities and schedules of the IRWM projects are identified in four tables within the IRWMP. Initial prioritization of projects is achieved by counting the number of regional priorities, statewide priorities, and program preferences that are addressed for each project. The prioritization process is also based upon readiness to precede, eligibility, and availability of other funding sources. A brief discussion of how decision making will be responsive to regional changes and how project sequencing may be altered based upon implementation responses is also provided.

Question: Implementation 4

The IRWMP identifies actions, projects, and studies by which the IRWMP will be implemented; specifics are not included in this section although enumerated elsewhere in the plan. A general timeline for project implementation is included. The IRWMP identifies the entities responsible for project implementation. However, the linkages and interdependence between the projects is not clearly identified.

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Question: Impacts and Regional Benefits

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The IRWMP summarizes the quantitative and qualitative benefits of each project and the potential benefits and impacts to other resources. However, IRWMP lacks specifics on the potential negative impacts of projects. The information is briefly presented in table format but not discussed in the text. The only potential negative impacts presented in the tables are construction impacts.

Question: Technical Analysis and Plan Performance

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The IRWMP summarizes several water management strategies that have been developed for the Water Forum Agreement and the new strategies that were added as additional stakeholders became involved. The IRWMP provides examples of data gaps, although a more detailed discussion is warranted. A description of project monitoring is provided for each project. The IRWMP does discuss mechanisms to adapt projects based on data gathered and performance.

Question: Data Management

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The IRWMP generally discusses the mechanisms by which data will be collected and managed. Support of statewide data needs will be by making data available to and coordinating data collection with the needs of CERES, SWAMP, and GAMA. The IRWMP provides a general discussion on the state of existing monitoring efforts for water supply and water quality. There is a general discussion of the mechanism for the distribution of data to the participating agencies. More detail is needed in the areas of existing monitoring efforts and distribution of data.

Question: Financing

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The IRWMP provides a general discussion of beneficiaries. A brief discussion on potential funding and financing mechanisms for IRWMP implementation is provided. Ongoing support and financing for the O&M of projects is identified. Projects must demonstrate ongoing support once completed. More detail in the area of ongoing support is needed.

Question: Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability

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The IRWMP identifies a long list of water management plans, studies, and related planning documents established by local agencies. The IRWMP discusses how the local planning documents relate to the water management strategies. The IRWMP states there will be coordination with local land-use decision-makers, and that they will be given an opportunity to review and comment on items related to their respective jurisdictions. The IRWMP also discusses the dynamics between the two levels of planning documents.

Question: Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination

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The applicant has a well established program for stakeholder involvement and public participation. The IRWMP states that they intend to manage an open and accessible process whereby stakeholders can voice concerns or make suggestions about the plan. The IRWMP lists a number of public outreach techniques and activities. The IRWMP states that they will periodically review the plan to ensure that no DACs are adversely affected, and to address any EJ concerns. The IRWMP discusses coordination with State and federal agencies.

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| Weighted IRWMP Total Score: 27 |
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Question: Work Plan

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The work plan includes an introduction with a detailed discussion of the goals and objectives of the proposal, a tabulated overview of projects including an abstract and project status, the synergies or linkages among projects, and a general map showing the relative project locations. A listing of permits and their status is provided, though most seem to still need substantial permits, including DFG streambed alteration, CESA, and EIRs. The submitted plans and specifications are consistent with the design tasks included in the work plan. However, for a few projects, the plans and specifications indicate that the design is not as far along as indicated in the work plan.

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Question: Budget

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A summary budget is included as are detailed budgets for each of the 14 proposed projects. Only one project shows that a PAEP will be prepared. Items shown in the budget generally agree with the work items; however, complete supporting documentation is missing. The percentage of project completion cannot be determined or substantiated. Three of the projects have budgeted work items that appear to be high and exceed industry norms. For some projects, the construction contingencies are high which further indicates that the planning is not as complete as indicated in the work plan.

Question: Funding Match

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The funding match is 93.5% of the total proposal costs.

Question: Schedule

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The proposal includes detailed schedules for each of the 14 proposed projects. However, the schedule is not entirely consistent and reasonable. All projects have significant work already completed. Only Projects 12 and 13 have the beginning of construction or implementation after December 1, 2007. PAEP preparation and approval is missing from the schedules. In general, post construction monitoring or evaluation is missing from the project schedules. Three of the 14 projects have a reasonable schedule given the scope of work. Of the remaining projects, permitting and CEQA scheduling appears to be optimistic.

Question: Scientific and Technical Merit

12

Much work has been done in this area. Supporting studies and data descriptions are complete for most of the projects. The background information is proportional to the complexity of the projects. For many projects, feasibility reports, pilot studies, design work, etc. are included. For a few projects, studies related to feasibility still need to be completed, but these are the simplest of the projects. Where feasibility or pilot studies are lacking, other types of information are provided. Feasibility based on ability to mitigate environmental effects of the more extensive and complex projects are demonstrated. However, data gaps are only addressed for a few projects.

Question: Monitoring, Assessment and Performance Measures

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For each proposed project the proposal includes, in tabular format, the project goals, desired outcomes, output/outcome indicators, measurement tools and methods, and targets. All outcomes seem feasible, but some lack measurable indicators.

Question: Economic Analysis

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The PV of costs is \$455 million and the PV of the quantified benefits ranges up to \$753 million. The overall assessment of the net benefits is high. Attachment 10 is well-written and documented, though no overall summary of costs and benefits is included. The cost calculations look adequate. The Freeport Project dominates the proposal costs. The benefits for this project are conservative at \$201 million, but could be up to \$583 million. The cost and benefit estimates for the other projects are generally reasonable, though several projects used avoided shortage as the benefit rather than the cost of a likely alternative project or water source. The avoided groundwater pumping costs for the Freeport Project in Attachment 11 are inconsistent with the assumption of shortage used in Attachment 10.

Question: Other Expected Benefits

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The descriptions and documentation indicate average levels of Other Expected Benefits. Benefits are described only for six out of 14 of the projects. The applicant provides detailed descriptions of the Other Expected Benefits from those projects. Supporting documentation is general in nature and typically extrapolated. For example, Project #11 would increase water quality thus enhance local recreational opportunity.

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Question: Program Preferences

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The applicant states that the projects will implement five of the six Program Preferences. The applicant demonstrates a significant degree of certainty that the Program Preferences claimed can be achieved. The magnitude and breadth of Program Preferences that the proposal will meet is well documented. There are some claims of regional impacts of projects which appear to be more localized.

Question: Statewide Priorities

24

The applicant states that all of the Statewide Priorities are met to some degree by the proposal. The primary focus appears to be on reducing regional conflicts between water users. There is a significant degree of certainty that conflicts between water users will be reduced by implementation of the proposal. Also, while some of the Statewide Priorities are met to a lesser degree, the magnitude and breadth of these claims are well documented. The claims of implementing TMDLs and WMIs are not well supported. The reduction of Mercury TMDL is not well supported. Water supply benefits supporting CALFED goals do not identify qualitatively water that will be dedicated to meet in-stream and Delta water needs. Water generated by the projects is to meet existing and future needs.

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| Total Proposal Score: | 116 |
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